

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 1, line 4, with the following rewritten paragraph:

In the case of turbofans and lift fans, it is beneficial to have “wide-chord” fan blades with a low aspect ratio (i.e. height to chord ratio) to maximise the mass flow and pressure rise. With the advent of advanced construction techniques, as described in European Patent EP568201 and British Patent ~~GB230635~~GB2306353, wide-chord fan blades can now be made light enough for use in gas turbines aero-engines.